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ABSTRACT

Racism can be defined as any attitude, belief, behavior, or institutional arrangement that favors one race or ethnic group over another. This discussion of racism for young people defines attitudinal racism, ideological racism, individual or group discrimination, and institutional racism as four aspects of racism in the United States. While some scientists have abandoned the idea of classifying human beings into races, the average person continues to identify himself or herself and others as members of a particular race. This type of classification has been in effect throughout history, and continues, in spite of advances in civil rights, today. More subtle than overt racism is the institutional racism that society's structures have established and often maintain. Efforts to desegregate the school system have reduced some manifestations of institutional racism, and research indicates that schools in the past 20 years have been very successful in teaching children that it is wrong to judge people based on the color of their skin. Debates over multicultural education, ethnocentrism, political correctness, and racism are becoming more open, and must be considered by every person interested in reducing racism in the United States. (Contains a list of nine books for further reading.) (SLD)

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